AMENDMENTS

In the Specification:

Page 6, line 38, to page 7, line 3, amend the paragraphs as follows:

Figs. 4 to 6 show sections through the shaft at different heights thereof, with Fig. 4 being drawn transversely in the region of reference numeral 2 on Fig. 1, Fig. 5 being drawn transversely in the region of reference numeral 9 on Fig. 1 and Fig. 6 being drawn transversely in the region of reference numeral 17 on Fig. 1, and

~~Figs 7 and 8 show sections~~ Fig. 7 shows a section, corresponding to ~~Figs~~ Fig. 5 ~~and 6~~, of the embodiment with a rectangular shaft core cross-section.

Page 8, line 1, to page 9, line 11, amend the paragraphs as follows: Aeg 4/21/09

Below the transition area 9, the distal shaft portion 7 has a length of approximately 4 to 8, preferably approximately 6 to 7 cm. Its core 12 tapers from its proximal end 9 to its distal end 11 in a ratio of approximately 10 to 15 mm^2/cm. The tapering takes place principally on the lateral and medial sides. The LM dimension 13 at the upper end 9 of the distal portion, which dimension is approximately 17 mm ~~in a first example according to Fig. 5~~, decreases as far as the distal end 11, according to Fig. 6, ~~to a diameter of 10 mm, whereas the dimension 15 in the AP direction decreases only by approximately 2 to 3 mm. In the example according to Figs 7 and 8, the LM dimension decreases from approximately 18~~ to approximately 14 mm.

In the distal portion, the surface of the shaft core is equipped with ribs 16 which between them enclose surface strips 17 of the shaft core surface. The ribs arranged on the longitudinal edges of the rectangular cross section are indicated in Fig. 6 by reference numeral 21. At the transition 9, the ribs 16 merge with zero height into the shaft surface, and at the distal end 11 they reach a height of approximately 1 mm above the shaft core surface. On account of the reduction in cross section of the shaft core from proximal to distal, the surface strips 17 formed between the ribs act as wedge surfaces which, when the shaft is driven into the medullary canal, compress the predominantly lamellar bone substance located there in the interspace between the